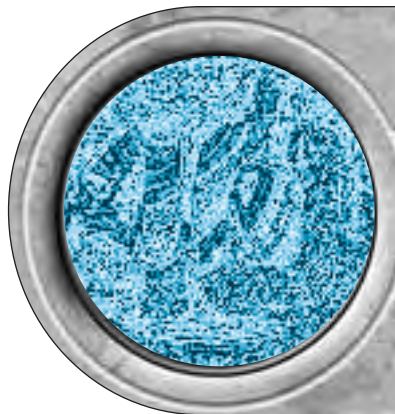




RESISTING NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE

What Stinks?

March 5, 2011

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Romans 12:2 (The Bible in Basic English) •

"And let not your behaviour be like that of this world, but be changed and made new in mind, so that by experience you may have knowledge of the good and pleasing and complete purpose of God."

Psalms 1:1 (NCV) • "Happy is the person who doesn't listen to the wicked. He doesn't go where sinners go. He doesn't do what bad people do."

(See also Judges 13-16; Luke 22:54-62; John 1:35-46; Ephesians 5:1; 1 John 2:6; additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT "RESISTING NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE"

Peer pressure is a fact of life for everyone, not just adolescents. Peer pressure can be good or bad, positive or negative. Positive peer pressure can help young people excel in a certain area, introduce them to new skills and activities, broaden their circle of friends and interests. Negative peer pressure can have the opposite effect. It can stunt growth, weaken character, reduce self-confidence. The important thing for young people to learn is to pray

for discernment to recognize when they are being subjected to negative peer pressure and to learn skills that, through the Spirit's power, will deflect it. It is also important for them to be reminded of the grace that will see them through if they do succumb to the negative pressure.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "RESISTING NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE"

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Know that peer pressure can be positive or negative.
2. Acquire strategies to thwart negative peer pressure.
3. Believe that God's grace will provide the discernment and the power needed.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) set of stickers, string, or strips of paper in three to five colors or shades (one should be a combination of two colors); (Activity B) paper, pens or pencils.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons.

Applying • Two bowls, powdered sugar (or granulated sugar or sugar water); cornstarch (or salt or vinegar or salt water), spoons (or chopsticks or tongue depressors), enough for each student.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Ask them which verse they chose to learn from Wednesday's portion of their lesson. Give them opportunity to say their verses from memory.
2. Give the students opportunity to "quote" themselves, using what they wrote in the Monday portion of their lesson. Be sure to debrief them about any quotations that might not reflect the Christian life accurately. However, quotations of this nature do not occur in every lesson.
3. Review responses that they and others made to the scenario that was posed on Sunday. Discuss the variety of responses, ending with thoughts from last week's What's to Be Said About . . . in the teacher lesson.

If you have a very large group, have adults available to process this section with smaller groups of students.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adult* at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word. At some point you should distribute or call their attention to their

student lesson for this week.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Obtain a set of stickers, string, or strips of paper in three to five colors or shades. One should be a combination of two colors.

Get set • Have the students close their eyes as you circulate and place a sticker on their forehead or tie a string around their finger or wrist, or place a piece of paper in their hands. Leave one person without anything.

Go • Tell them all to open their eyes and without talking to anyone, arrange themselves in the groupings that they consider best, or with which they are most comfortable. Give the students a few minutes to arrange themselves. Observe their groupings, then debrief.

Debriefing • Ask: Why are you in the group that you are? (Because someone led me here; I felt comfortable here; it seemed like the logical place to be; I don't know; I thought we should be grouped by color.) **How did you decide to be with this group? How much did others influence you to be here?** (a little; a lot; not at all) Ask the persons with two colors how they decided to be with the group they are with (or why they are still not with a group). **How did it feel to be different/left out?**

Say: Part of the reason you did what you did is because of peer pressure. Others in the class wanted you in the group so you went along with them. Today we will talk about peer pressure.

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Lay paper and writing utensils on all the chairs. Stand in one corner of the room.

Get set • Without speaking, smile at the students who sit on the side of the room you are on. Ignore the students who sit on the other side. Do this until all the students have arrived.

Go • Debrief when everyone has settled in.

Debriefing • Ask: Why are you sitting where you are? (Because you seemed to want us to sit there; because everyone else was sitting there.) Why didn't you sit on the other side? (You didn't seem to want us to sit there. No one else was sitting there.)

If some students did sit on other side, **ask:** How did you feel sitting on the other side? (weird, left out, not a part of the class; cool, the best)

Say: You are sitting where you are because of peer pressure—and a little teacher pressure. Nonverbally, I indicated to you where I wanted you to sit. You then influenced your classmates to sit there. Not wanting to feel left out, they did. Peer pressure can be hard to detect unless you think about it. We'll talk about that today.

(Note: Be prepared for a different result, and a different debriefing. Perhaps a popular kid will decide to sit on the "other" side of the room and others will follow. The point can still be made, particularly that the "peer" pressure was stronger than the little bit of teacher pressure.)

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

Have two students ahead of time ad-lib a skit in which one tries to convince the other to do something wrong and the other talks him out of it.

Debriefing • Ask: What just happened here? Do you know the term for it?

Say: Peer pressure is when people your own age try to influence how you act. Peer pressure can be positive or negative. The way you deal with it determines which it is.

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Have the students read **John 1:35-46**.

Present the following ideas in your own words:

In this passage we see Jesus' first disciples were originally followers of John the Baptist. Because John endorsed Jesus (see verse 36) and the disciples knew John, they decided to follow Jesus when he asked them to (verse 43). Philip, Andrew, and Peter were from the same hometown so there was a connection there too (verse 44). Then Philip found Nathanael and told him about Jesus (verse 45). When Nathanael objects, Philip says, "Come and see (verse 46). This is a good example of peer pressure.

Remember, peer pressure is defined as the influence of someone who is like you in some way. The first four disciples were all from the same town and about the same age. Jesus offered them something positive and they decided to respond. It was easier to respond because their peers were responding too. This is a good example of positive peer pressure.

Peer pressure can be negative too. As agents of the kingdom, your job is to exert positive peer pressure on your friends to follow Jesus while at the same time resisting negative peer pressure that will keep you and others from following Him.

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Read or ask someone beforehand to read the story from Sabbath's portion of the lesson.

Ask: What could Gregory have said when Josh and Seth pressured him about helping them? (No way. No thanks. I'll be busy.) What could he have done? (Left. Tried to find an alternative.) Have you ever been in a position like this? Explain. Why do you think Gregory went along even though it did not seem right to him? (His friends were encouraging/pressuring him. He didn't want to feel left out or like a spoilsport.) How do you think Gregory and Josh felt when Seth turned himself in? (surprised, guilty) What should Gregory and Josh have learned from this experience? (Just

say no. Together they could have stood up to Seth's idea. Josh should have learned to trust his instincts.)

Have someone read **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**.

Say: This is a true story. It happened at a high school in the United States. The verses we just read and this story remind us of the power of peers to influence one another. Friends—or peers—can help you up or bring you down.

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following scenario:

Your parents have dropped you off at an all-day youth rally at your school one Sabbath. After they drive away, a few of your friends say, "That new singing group is giving a free concert at the mall at lunch time. We can take the bus over there and be back here before the rally is over. Our parents will never know. Are you coming with us?"

Ask: What will you say? (I don't do things like that on Sabbath. I can't leave; my parents expect me to stay here. I don't want to. I'd rather stay here.) **What will you do?** (Find other friends to spend the day with. Walk with them and pretend to go, then say you changed your mind. Go to the bathroom and hide until they are gone. Call your parents and ask for permission.)

Say: Knowing who you are and whose you are, knowing that you can turn to God for wisdom and strength, will help you to make the right choice in this and other circumstances. Fortifying yourself with Bible verses (honor your parents; remember the Sabbath; do not lie) and thinking ahead about what to do in a situation are also ways to resist negative peer pressure.

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Have the students sit in a circle. Place two clear bowls in the center. In each have a similar looking, but different tasting wet or dry substance such as the following: for bowl one—either dry powdered or granulated sugar or sugar water; for bowl two—cornstarch or salt, or water with salt or vinegar. Give each person a spoon (or chopstick or tongue depressor).

Say: Every day we have to make decisions. It's tough trying to make good choices. Let's practice making a decision right now.

Ask the students to look at the bowls' contents then decide which one they want to taste. **Say:** We'll go around the circle and you can take as little or as much as will fit on your spoon. Wait until everyone has a spoonful, then we'll all eat what we've chosen.

After everyone has tasted their selection [expect some outcry], debrief.

Debriefing • Ask: What did you think about your choice? How was this experience like decisions you make in life? What advice would you give to someone when it comes to making the right decisions?

Have a volunteer read aloud **Ephesians 5:1** and **1 John 2:6**.

Ask: What do these passages tell us about making decisions? (God has to help us. If we imitate Him, we won't go wrong.)

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a time when someone tried to get you to do something you knew you shouldn't and you resisted. How did you get the strength to resist?
2. What are some possible answers to give when someone tries to pressure you to do something you know is wrong?
3. What do you say when someone says, "Come on. No one will ever find out."
4. If you have given in to negative peer pressure, how do you keep it from happening the next time? What do you say to friends

who remind you that you have done wrong before?

5. How can you exert positive peer pressure on others? Talk about a time when you did.
6. Give examples from the Bible of people who exerted negative peer pressure on others.

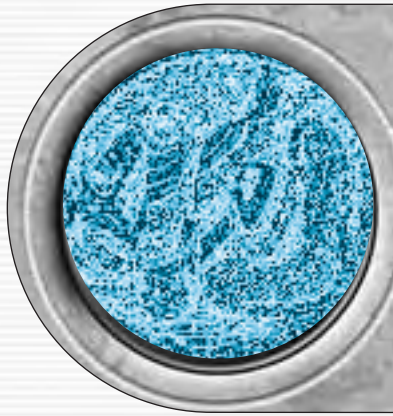
6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord,

"and my servant whom I have chosen" (**Isaiah 43:10, NIV**). Remembering that we are God's witnesses and agents of His kingdom is one way of remembering where the power is to resist negative peer pressure. Starting from that idea, we know that our job is to exert positive peer pressure on people to follow Jesus and with His power to choose to do the right thing. We can also think of possible situations (people, places, things) that may cause us to be influenced to do wrong. We should plan and practice what we will say so that we will be ready when temptations come—which they will.



STUDENT LESSON

RESISTING NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE

What Stinks?

March 5, 2011

>>KEY TEXT: Choose one of the texts from Wednesday's portion of the lesson. Write it here and memorize it this week.



WHAT STINKS?

(What connection do you think the following illustration has with the Bible texts on the other page?)

Josh, Gregory, and Seth were in their next to the last year of high school. They were good students. They were also mischievous. They played high-spirited pranks on one another and on their classmates.

Two days before school was out they had finished their final exams and were feeling restless. Seth said, "We should do something really crazy tomorrow. No one will know it's us because they will think it's someone who is graduating."

"What should we do?" asked Josh.

"Why don't we put something really stinky in the vents and we'll stink up the school so badly, we'll have to get out early," replied Seth.

"I don't know," said Gregory. "That might not be such a good idea."

"Don't be such a spoilsport," said Seth. "No one will ever find out. It will be fun."

"We won't be hurting anyone," said Gregory. "Besides, everyone needs a good laugh. They're all tense from studying for finals."

"Well, I guess," said Gregory.

"C'mon, Greg," chided Seth. "You're not bailing out on us now. It's almost the last day of school. Even if we get caught—which we won't—what could they do to us?"

"OK," said Gregory. "I'll do it."

The boys made plans to go to the fish market and get chum, frozen fish scraps. That night they snuck into the school. Taking their cooler of chum with them, they went all over the school placing pieces of it in desks, lockers, cabinets, vents, fans, ceiling tiles, tissue dispensers. Within an hour it was everywhere.

The next day when they arrived at school everyone was complaining about the smell, but no one seemed to know where it was coming from. That is, until some people opened their lockers and their desks. Their classmates screamed and cried at what they found. Seth, Gregory, and Josh just played along, but they were laughing inside.

Things got worse at lunch time. The chum the boys had placed in the ceiling tiles melted and fell down on a group of students trying to eat their lunch. Everyone lost their appetite. Then as the day got hotter, the smell became worse. Students started gagging and becoming sick to their stomachs.

The headmistress made an announcement asking whoever had played the prank to report to the office. Assuming that students who were graduating had done it, she sharply criticized them. Still the three said nothing. The smell and fumes be-

came so bad that school was dismissed early.

Word got out about the prank and suddenly all the radio stations were talking about it. Seth was listening to the radio as the announcers were discussing who would have done such a thing. Seth got excited and called the station, confessing that he and his friends had done it. He had even thought up a fake name to give if they asked who he was, but he accidentally said his own name. The announcer repeated his name on the air. Seth knew he was in trouble.

The next day as soon as he got to school, Seth was called to the principal's office. He was encouraged to name his accomplices, but he refused. He was shocked when a few minutes later a police officer arrived. Seth was charged with a crime that went on his record. Although he could have been sent to juvenile jail, he was instead sentenced to helping the janitor clean up the mess. In addition he had to spend his summer doing community service projects. And he never did get to the beach or the mountains. To his credit, he took full responsibility for his actions and never told that his friends were involved.



Sunday

HERE'S WHAT I THINK

You are at a party with your friends. One of them produces a lighter and a tea bag. She rolls it like a cigarette and "smokes" it. Your other friends try it too and invite you to join them. You hesitate. "It's just tea. It's not like you're smoking a real cigarette," they say. Do you agree with them? Why or why not? How do you respond?

Log on to www.guidemagazine.org/rtf, to post your responses. Be up-front and honest. Say what you think.



Monday

WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO SAY?

Different people, different opinions. Some of the quotations below represent the views of true kingdom citizens; others may not. Can you tell the difference? How do these statements compare with what God is saying in

His Word? After reviewing the texts in the God Says . . . portion of the lesson, write a statement that captures your belief. Be prepared to quote yourself at Sabbath School.

>>"An insincere and evil friend is more to be feared than a wild beast; a wild beast may wound your body, but an evil friend will wound your mind."—

Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism about 500 B.C.

>>"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."—

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th-century U.S. essayist, poet, philosopher.

>>"He who joyfully marches in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would fully suffice."—Albert Einstein, 20th-century U.S.

(German-born) physicist.

>>"When push comes to shove, think independently."—Charles Swindoll, current U.S. author and pastor.

>>"He that lies with the dogs, riseth with fleas."—George Herbert, 17th-century English poet.

>>"No doubt another may also think for me; but it is not therefore desirable that he should do so to the exclusion of my thinking for myself."—Henry

David Thoreau, 19th-century U.S. writer.

>>"Since you are like no other being ever created since the beginning of time, you are incomparable."—Brenda Ueland, 20th-century U.S. writer from

Minnesota.

>>"We're decision-making animals, every one of us."—Jennifer James, current U.S. cultural anthropologist, author, columnist.

Write your own quotation.

WHAT I SAY IS . . .



Tuesday

SO WHAT?

Peer pressure is that state of being influenced by people in your age or social group. Many Bible characters experienced peer pressure. Think about Samson (**Judges 13-16**). He hung out with the wrong crowd, the Philistines. His girlfriend was a Philistine. She pressured him into telling the secret of his strength, and he lost not only his strength but his freedom. Blind and alone, he started to think about God and his family. In time God gave him back his strength and he was able to behave like the warrior of Israel that God had intended him to be.

Peter experienced peer pressure. He was ashamed of being a follower of Christ so he tried to behave like all the other people gathered to watch Jesus' humiliation during His trial at the high priest's house (**Luke 22:54-62**). Later Peter felt so bad that he became an awesome force for good and for God. He then exerted positive peer pressure on others. As an agent of God's kingdom, you are called, in the Spirit's power, to resist negative peer pressure and to exert positive peer pressure.



Wednesday

GOD SAYS . . .

>>Psalm 133:1 (NCV)

"It is good and pleasant when God's people live together in peace!"

>>Psalm 1:1 (NCV)

"Happy is the person who doesn't listen to the wicked. He doesn't go where sinners go. He doesn't do what evil people do."

>>Proverbs 1:10-15 (NIV)

"If sinners entice you, do not give in to them. If they say, 'Come along with us'; . . . do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths."

>>Proverbs 17:17 (NLT)

"A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need."

>>Proverbs 18:24 (NLT)

"There are 'friends' who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother."

>>Romans 12:2 (The Bible in Basic English)

"And let not your behaviour be like that of this world, but be changed and be made new in mind, so that by experience you may have knowledge of the good and pleasing and complete purpose of God."



Thursday

WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

Peer pressure is a fact of life. Even adults have to deal with it. It never really goes away. The thing you can do about peer pressure is to know how to handle it. One thing you can do is to know exactly how God made you to function best. Then know yourself; know what is important to you, and what you believe in.

Another thing is to know whose you are. You are a child of God and an agent of the kingdom. As such you have to adhere to a higher standard and be faithful to God and what He asks you to do.

A very practical thing you can do to resist negative peer pressure is to surround yourself with positive people who not only believe as you do, but who also put their beliefs into practice and encourage you to do the same. A final thing you can do is to practice responses to some of the things your peers may ask you to do. It's easier to say "no" when you've done it a number of times—even if it has been in the privacy of your own room!



Friday

HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Go to a search engine such as Google, type in "peer pressure quiz," and see if you can find one to take just for fun.
2. According to the anti-drug Web site of the Do It Now Foundation, there are five steps to every decision. The first letter of

each step spells out the word IDEAL. Thinking these steps out ahead of time, asking God to give you wisdom, is the ideal way to make positive decisions when you are faced with negative peer pressure. Try it with some situations you know you will probably face.

Identify the problem situation you are faced with.

Describe some possible actions you could take.

Evaluate those ideas. Which one is the best?

Act out the plan you decide on.

Learn for the future.

Try describing IDEAL behavior for the following situations. Remember to include prayer for strength and guidance before, after, and all the way through the steps.

1. Your teammates want you to skip church to play in an exhibition game for charity. The winning team gets to name the amount of money that will go to help children orphaned by AIDS. Your teammates say they can't win without you; besides, it's for a good cause.

2. Your cousin invites you to spend the night at her house. Her parents call to say that they will be late returning home from a meeting because they have car trouble. She invites some neighbor boys over, although she knows she isn't supposed to have guests when her parents aren't home.

3. In your home the rule is: No tattoos. No piercings. No jewelry. But your best friend's sister's boyfriend's uncle is a tattoo artist. Your best friend says, "He can sign the permission slips and give us the tattoo or pierce our navels. The tattoo can be really small and it won't be in a place where anyone will see it. You always cover your stomach anyway, so no one will ever see your naval ring. And my sister will pay for everything. She gets a discount."



